Cooperative Research Awards (FY2000 Funding)

1) to the University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth, a contract to conduct a high-resolution fishery resource survey. The University's School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) will work with at least 23 trawlers from the New Bedford area to get information about fish distribution on a tow by tow basis. Members of the Trawler Survival Fund will provide information to SMAST on their catches in 5000 tows. The purpose is to get a finer scale picture of fish distribution and abundance in areas southeast of Cape Cod and to improve our understanding of Catch per Unit Effort. (cost: up to $570,090)

2) to the New England Aquarium, to convene a task force of fishermen and scientists who will develop a comprehensive plan for a major cod-tagging program in the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank. The Aquarium will hold a series of town meetings in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island to get local fishermen's advice on what a cod tagging program should entail. A detailed plan is expected by April. (cost: up to $110,000)

3) to Boat Kathleen Mirarchi, Inc, to study the effects of trawl gear on soft bottom in Cape Cod Bay. The project will assess the effects of trawl gear, including doors, cables and nets on the animal communities living in and on the ocean floor and will study the short-term impacts of trawling on the characteristics of the sediment and water column. (cost: up to $150,990)

4) To the Undersea Research Foundation, Inc. of Tom's River, NJ to study the correlation between whiting abundance and bottom water temperatures in the mid-Atlantic Bight. The project will also investigate stock structure of whiting in the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank and the mid-Atlantic Bight using genetic techniques. (cost: up to $79,920)

5) to Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences to conduct a series of scoping meetings to discuss bycatch reduction techniques with fishermen. The contract calls for convening 10 meetings, which will be held in or near Stonington, CT, Point Judith, RI, New Bedford, MA, Cape Cod, Scituate, MA, Gloucester, MA, Portsmouth, NH, Portland, ME, Port Clyde, ME and Ellsworth, ME. The meetings will be held close to the docks and will be held either in the afternoon or evening. (cost: up to $76,750)

6) to the Maine Department of Marine Resources to develop a whiting fishery in the Gulf of Maine that meets conservation goals for size selectivity and bycatch. The project will test 2-1/2 inch diamond mesh and 2-1/4 inch square mesh with a 50 mm bar space grate in combination with a raised footrope net configuration to determine whether bycatch reduction targets can be met. It will also produce video footage of the interaction between the gear and fish and the gear and the ocean bottom. (cost: up to $181,900)

7) to the Maine Department of Marine Resources to conduct inshore trawl surveys in the Gulf of

Maine. This project continues a pilot program initiated through a grant by the Northeast Consortium. Under this contract, there will be seven surveys conducted. There will be a survey in the spring and in the fall, and five surveys sampling four stations along each of six transects from Cape Ann to Frenchmen Bay during other months of the year. Maine DMR will work with the Lobster Zone Management Councils to minimize gear conflicts. (cost: up to $503,300)

8) to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology/Sea Grant to identify and evaluate existing data logging and reporting devices. The project will test different designs of electronic reporting devices in a small number of inshore and offshore trawlers, gillnetters and longliners. The contractor will also provide advice on how to integrate these or similar devices into a groundfish study fleet. (cost: up to $137,000)

9) to the Maine Department of Marine Resources to test bycatch in an observer-based experimental shrimp fishery in an area of relatively higher groundfish concentration than is in currently allowed shrimping grounds. The goal of the project is to determine whether a shrimp fishery can be conducted southeast of the Loran 25600 line and still remain within acceptable groundfish bycatch limits. Specifically, the project will test the effectiveness of the Nordmore grate in this area of higher groundfish concentrations.(cost: up to $152,334)

10) to the University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth to test specific bycatch reduction techniques in trawl gear. (cost: up to $122,700)

11) to GOM Aquarium to conduct meetings with the fishing industry to investigate industry-based surveys and study fleets, and draft a report on the findings. (cost: up to $24,690)